

"INAPPROPRIATE REPORT" CONCLUSION CODE (G)

An inappropriate report is defined as any report received for investigation that does not contain allegations of abuse or neglect specified in Missouri State Child Abuse and Neglect statute (Section 210 RSMo). This statute contains specific information regarding allegations of abuse and neglect that must be investigated or responded to as a family assessment by Children's Division (CD). If, during an investigation or family assessment the worker discovers the report does not fall within the state statute, it must be concluded as an Inappropriate Report.

In most cases, Inappropriate reports will be screened out by Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Unit staff. In those situations where the investigator has concluded the Investigation or Family Assessment and feels the report should be coded as an "Inappropriate Report", the report must be referred to the County Director or Supervisor III for review and approval of this finding prior to entry into the CA/N automated system. Staff should consult with Area staff if the Supervisor III or County Director have questions regarding the correct use of this conclusion.

It is important to use the most appropriate family assessment or investigative conclusion that reflects the worker's findings. Investigations that do not support the allegations should be coded as unsubstantiated. A report should be coded as inappropriate only if it does not meet the criteria for investigation. An example of an inappropriate report is a report where, during the investigation, the investigator verifies the victim is 18 years old or over.

Listed below are examples of reports that **DO NOT** meet the criteria as an Inappropriate Report:

- Example #1 - A report is taken by a non-custodial parent on his spouse alleging lack of supervision. Similar allegations had been reported in prior hotlines. The investigator feels the report should be considered an Inappropriate Report because the allegations had already been unsubstantiated in prior reports and regarded this investigation as a duplicate report.

In this example, the report should have been concluded as unsubstantiated because the allegations were investigated and determined to be unfounded. Regarding the duplicate report issue, the investigator should review the report to determine if the report meets the duplicate report criteria.

Related Subject: Chapter 1.7.5 of this section, Duplicate Reports.
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- Example #2 - A report is taken by a day care worker alleging scratches and bruises on the victim. The investigator found no evidence of physical abuse and a review of prior reports reveals the reporter has a history of exaggerating allegations. The investigator concludes the report as Inappropriate Report so that the allegations will not remain in the system.

Although the reporter has a history of exaggerating the allegations, the incident must be investigated. The conclusion must be based on the investigators findings obtained through interviews, documents and other information. In this situation, the investigator did not find any evidence of physical abuse so the report should be concluded as unsubstantiated. Inappropriate reports are expunged on the next system expungement sweep. Coding this report as Inappropriate would also mean the loss of this historical information in the automated system.

- Example #3 - A reporter alleges lack of supervision on her neighbor. The investigator reviews the prior history on the family and finds the reporter has made these allegations numerous times and that each investigation was concluded as unsubstantiated. The investigation reveals that neglect did not occur and is coded as harassment by the investigator and concluded as Inappropriate Report.

In this situation, the investigator should use the information provided from previous reports to assist in the determination. The investigator concluded there was no lack of supervision so the conclusion must be unsubstantiated. If the report meets the Harassment Indicators, the report should be coded as "harassment" in the CA/N automated system and a referral made to the prosecuting attorney, if warranted.

Related Subject: Attachment C of this chapter, Harassment Indicators.

- Example #4 - A report is taken alleging educational neglect on a 15 year old. The investigator documents the youth had dropped out of high school but verifies that he had enrolled in military school in another city. The investigator notified the school of the change and concluded the report as an Inappropriate Report.

The investigator determined there was no educational neglect because it was verified that the youth is enrolled in another school. The conclusion for this report is unsubstantiated.

Listed below is an example of a report that **DOES** meet the criteria as an Inappropriate Report:

- Example - A report is taken alleging the lack of supervision of a child reported as 10 years old. During the investigation, the worker verifies the victim's age as 18 years of age.

In this example, the report can be concluded as an "Inappropriate Report" as the investigator verified the victim's age as 18 years old. The Division does not investigate child abuse and neglect allegations involving victims who are 18 years of age or older. However, if allegations such as sexual abuse are alleged, the report should be referred to law enforcement authorities.

MEMORANDA HISTORY: